

Sangamon Valley LEPC

P.O. Box 2105, Springfield IL 62705

January 15, 2009

Summary Report Relative to LEPC Activities During 2008

During calendar year 2008, this LEPC convened regularly scheduled meetings on five occasions: January 17, March 20, May 15, September 18 and November 20. A quorum of our membership was present at each of these meetings. All meetings were held at the Office of the State Fire Marshal, except for the September meeting which was hosted by the Sangamon County Office of Emergency Management.

The January LEPC meeting provided the Chair, David Butt, with the opportunity to present the committee with the 2007 LEPC Summary Report which was reviewed and approved for submission to the State Emergency Response Committee (SERC). As 2008 began, our Emergency Coordinator, Matt Helms, had completed site specific plans for 25 facilities storing Extremely Hazardous Substances (EHS). By the January meeting, Matt had his 26th completed plan – for Brandt Consolidated’s Williamsville facility which stores Anhydrous Ammonia (NH₃) adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

This vulnerability highlights the risk associated with all NH₃ storage facilities. Recognizing this, the Chair sent letters to 3 owner/operators storing NH₃ in the rural Pawnee area which had never filed Tier 2 forms with the LEPC or SERC to encourage their compliance. These 3 sites were identified to the LEPC by the Sheriff’s Office whose Drug Interdiction and Response Team keeps close track of NH₃ storage for its potential for theft.

The January LEPC meeting featured a presentation by Linda Wheeland, a Senior Planner with the Springfield - Sangamon County Regional Planning Commission (SSCRPC). Linda discussed the County’s Multi-jurisdictional Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan which was in the process of being developed. Six members of this LEPC serve on the task force for this plan. During 2008, Linda’s duties with SSCRPC would shift to Transportation Planner and by May she was added to the membership of this LEPC representing the transportation function.

The March LEPC meeting gave the committee an opportunity to review and discuss a journal article entitled “Emergency Planning and Community Integration” which appeared in the February publication of Environment of Care News. The article examines and praises the relationships that St. John’s Hospital has established with numerous entities of our community for emergency preparedness, including this LEPC.

Matt Helms was in the midst of updating the site plan for City Water Light and Power (CWLP) and used the March LEPC meeting as an opportunity to get the committee’s input on critical facilities that would be impacted by an EHS release at this site. Conversation on this topic featured a proposal that the Hope Institute, a residential school for severely handicapped children, be encouraged to use in-place sheltering as its first recourse for such emergencies.

For the May LEPC meeting, a safety and risk manager from Hope Institute was invited to attend. The Chair secured a video “Shelter-in-Place Know What To Do” and, after showing it to the committee, presented a copy to the Hope Institute representative. Earlier in the spring, a copy of this same video had also been given to the director of a new juvenile psychiatric hospital which is now operating in Springfield, just a few miles west of CWLP.

By May, the SERC's extended deadline for the annual filing of Tier 2 forms had passed. At this juncture, we had received 102 forms for facilities in Sangamon County, with 41 of these storing EHS. With several forms still missing, this was a marked increase over the total of 90 Tier 2 forms for the previous year. This increase was attributed to a larger number of active oil wells because of the high price for crude and an aggressive program to get proper filings for NH3 storage sites.

Later in May, the SERC approached this LEPC about whether we had the capacity to assist Menard County with its planning for EHS storage sites. We received a list of 16 Menard County facilities which had filed Tier 2 forms with the SERC. We requested and received the actual Tier 2 forms for the 8 facilities which store EHS in Menard County. Over the next several months, the Chair proceeded to have separate conversations with the Menard County Emergency Manager, the SERC, our Emergency Coordinator and the Sangamon County Administrator. It was determined that we could help Menard County and that the most effective way to do so was to have the SERC increase the planning district of this LEPC from one county to two.

On August 1, 2008, our name changed from Sangamon County LEPC to Sangamon Valley LEPC. Arrangements were made for adding 4 persons from Menard County to the membership of this LEPC and appointing the Menard County Emergency Manager to become LEPC Secretary.

When the LEPC next met in September, these changes were presented to the committee and new members were recognized. The September LEPC meeting was our annual meeting for public review of our planning documents. A press release to this effect had been issued, but no one from the general public attended for this purpose.

The committee reviewed the compensation to Matt Helms for the planning work that he is doing on behalf of the LEPC. Higher levels of compensation were approved for Matt Helms effective with the new federal fiscal year, in part, recognizing greater compensation for work done in Menard County.

With proper notice as required by the LEPC's original by-laws, the Chair distributed to all members of the LEPC a proposal to amend these by-laws at the November LEPC meeting. At the very least, the new name of the LEPC necessitated changing the by-laws. The committee discussed this by-laws amendment proposal and introduced additional amendments at the November LEPC meeting. The original by-laws of the LEPC were amended, effective November 20, 2008, and distributed to all members before Thanksgiving.

Statistics for LEPC activities during 2008 are as follows:

105 Tier 2 forms were received for sites within Sangamon County. Of these, 63 included at least one EHS chemical and 42 were for non-EHS sites. Our Emergency Coordinator completed 17 new site specific plans. This brings his total over 3 years to 42. Of these 42 completed plans, 12 received their first annual revision and 13 received their second annual revision during 2008. The Emergency Coordinator drove nearly 4,000 miles during 2008 while pursuing our site specific planning project for EHS chemicals stored within Sangamon and Menard Counties. Sangamon Valley LEPC has 28 members, including 12 who first joined the committee in 2008.

Respectfully submitted,